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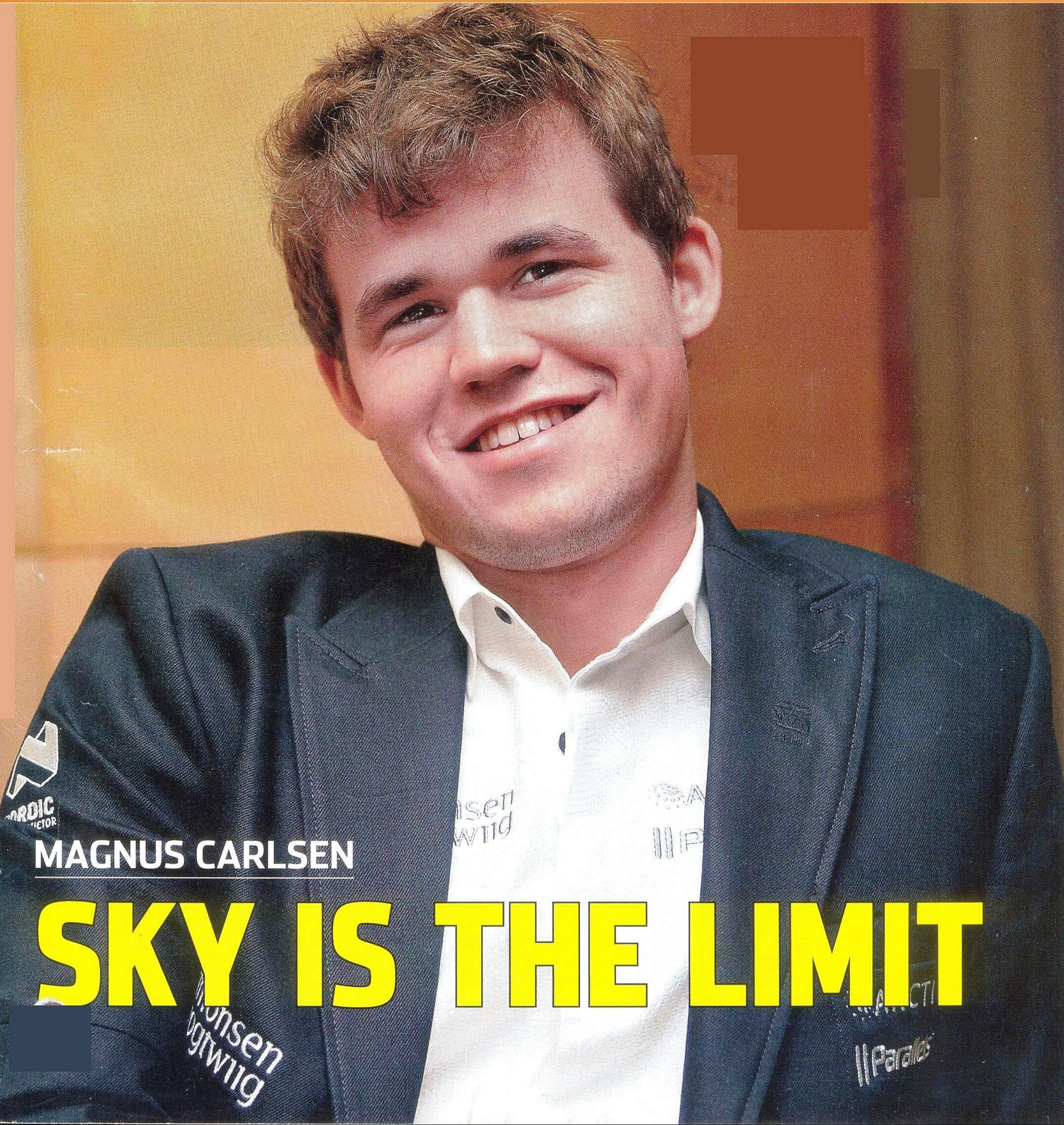

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MAGNUS CARLSEN

SKY IS THE LIMIT

MAGNUS...

A MAGNUM OPUS!

Magnus Carlsen is already **CHANGING THE WAY** players look at chess. He eschews the obsession with opening moves which has dominated Grandmaster study in recent decades. He may also change the way the world at large looks at the game. Here is a World Champion who models for the clothing company *G-Star Raw* in his spare time, and plays and follows multiple other sports! By IAN ROGERS.

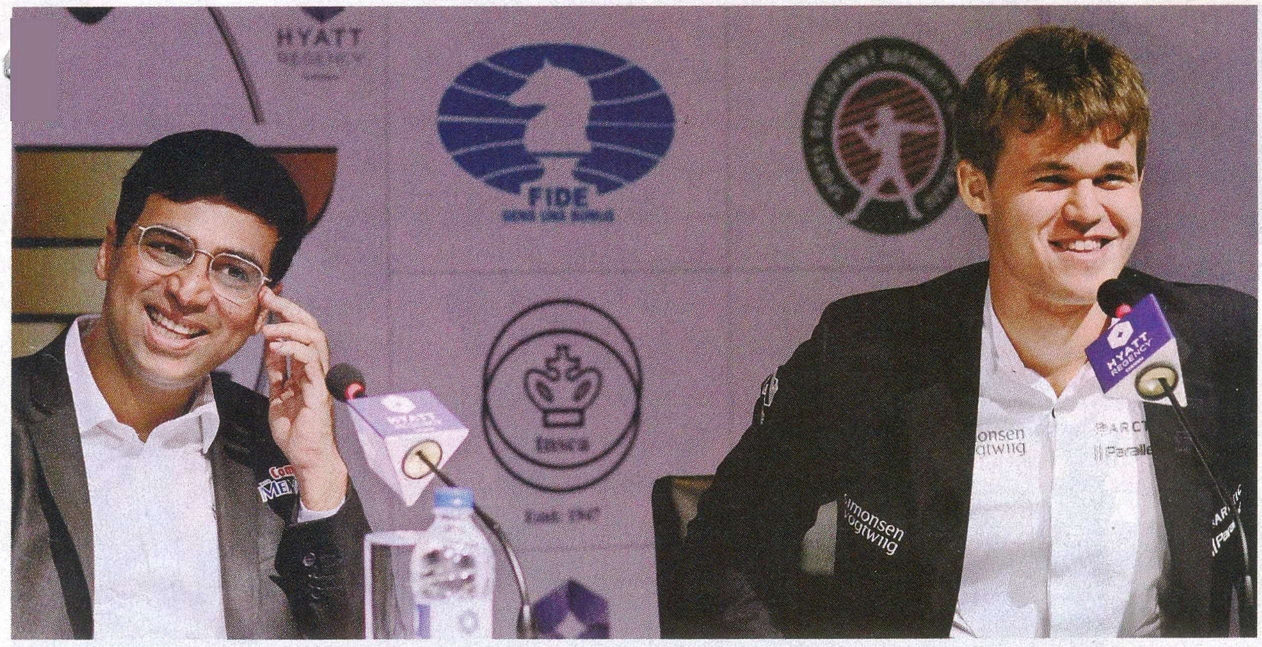
That Magnus Carlsen would have an unusual influence on the chess world has been clear since 2010 when the Grand Slam Final was rescheduled to avoid a clash with the New York Fashion Week.

Not long afterwards Carlsen dropped out of the World Championship cycle, claiming that the world federation, FIDE, was fiddling too often with the format and dates and explaining his preferred qualifying system. The main feature of Carlsen's preferred system, a Candidates tournament, was adopted for the next cycle.

SUCH ARE THE PERILS of having a world number one who models in his spare time and refuses to have his life and career controlled

K. V. SRINIVASAN

MAGNUS CARLSEN HAS BEEN WORLD NUMBER ONE ALMOST CONTINUOUSLY FOR MORE THAN THREE YEARS AND HAS WON SO MANY TOURNAMENTS THAT HE IS FAR AHEAD OF THE WORLD NUMBER TWO, LEVON ARONIAN.



by FIDE. (Carlsen also dropped out of the 2008-10 Grand Prix cycle when FIDE moved the events from cities in countries such as Switzerland and Qatar to venues not far from war zones in the Caucasus.)

WHETHER THE CHESS WORLD is ready for a Generation Y World Champion or not, Carlsen will be like no other of the 15 who have held the world title since 1886.

Carlsen has been world number one almost continuously for more than three years and has won so many tournaments that he is far ahead of the world number two, Levon Aronian, and has broken Garry Kasparov's rating record. He became the second youngest World Champion in history by beating the defending champion Anand without losing a game, using a brand of endurance chess rarely seen at top level.

CARLSEN'S WILL-TO-WIN is already legendary — comparable to the great Bobby Fischer — as shown by his attempt to win his final game against Anand when a draw was enough to take the world title. Even those who had criticised Carlsen's style of play as dry were impressed; here was a player who did not need to launch attacks on his opponent's king to exude aggression and determination.

CARLSEN IS ALREADY CHANGING the way players look at the game. He eschews the obsession with opening moves which has dominated Grandmaster study in recent decades. "I just try to play 40 or 50 good moves," explained Carlsen, "and challenge the opponent to do the same." To play without error for up to six hours requires great concentration, an attribute Carlsen has in spades but which few can emulate.

However, Carlsen may also change the way the world at large looks at chess.

HERE IS A WORLD CHAMPION who models for the clothing company *G-Star Raw* in his spare time, plays and follows multiple other sports and answers questions in press conferences with terms such as "Yada, yada, yada." (Summarising a boring draw, Carlsen said "I played the most solid line...yada yada yada...we went to the doping control.")

While Anand was never a big celebrity outside India and the world of chess, his replacement seems to have become a media darling almost overnight. Carlsen featured on *Time's* 100 Most Influential People of 2013, *Cosmopolitan's* Sexiest Men of 2013 and his title win was featured in the *Huffington Post's* Style section! He has more than 200,000 *Facebook* 'likes' and 55,000 *Twitter* followers.

WHEN ANAND WON his world title he spent the following day giving interviews to the journalists who had followed the match from day one. It was noticeable after his title win that Carlsen and his management gave priority to high profile media such as *CNN* and the *The New York Times,* neither of which was represented in Chennai. Even the Norwegian media were only granted a group interview and just one Indian newspaper, *The Hindu,* was given a

MAGNUS CARLSEN (ABOVE) IS TOTALLY INFORMAL AT PRESS CONFERENCES AND SES MANY COLLOQUIAL TERMS OF EXPRESSION.

SERGIO RAMOS
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WÜRTH

REUTERS

CARLSEN IS ALSO VERY INTERESTED IN OTHER SPORTS. HERE (ABOVE) HE TAKES AN HONORARY KICKOFF BEFORE THE SPANISH FIRST DIVISION SOCCER MATCH BETWEEN REAL MADRID AND REAL VALLADOLID, AT THE SANTIAGO BERNABEU STADIUM IN MADRID ON NOVEMBER 30, 2013. REAL MADRID'S SERGIO RAMOS LOOKS ON.

one-on-one interview.

As a consequence of his management's media strategy, Carlsen seems to be regularly fielding questions bearing no relation to his primary skill; questions ranging from whether he wants to be part of a dancing or reality show, to whether he has a girlfriend, would he require that his girlfriend be able to play chess and does he still have fellow *G-Star Raw* model Liv Tyler's phone number? (The answers are no, no, no, no and no.) After his match win Carlsen optimistically said that, "I'll be able to control some of it and steer clear of most of the nonsense," but he has had no luck so far doing so.

WITH SO MANY DISTRACTIONS and Hollywood knocking at his door — Carlsen has already declined a role in a Star Trek film — it might be thought likely that Carlsen, especially if he lacks a worthy challenger, will turn to other pursuits.

However, when asked if he would want to do something other than chess, Carlsen replied, "Ask me in 20 or 25 years' time."

Carlsen looks as if he wants to follow in Kasparov's footsteps and dominate the chess world for decades, a position which will thrill chess fans and strike fear into the hearts of the younger players among the world's top 20. (Carlsen's future conqueror may not have been born yet.)

THERE IS NO DOUBT that Carlsen's eyes light up when the questioning turns to chess. "I enjoyed the match (against Anand) much more than I had believed I would," said Carlsen. "Chess is a fantastic game," he added.

A REVOLUTIONARY CALLED MAGNUS

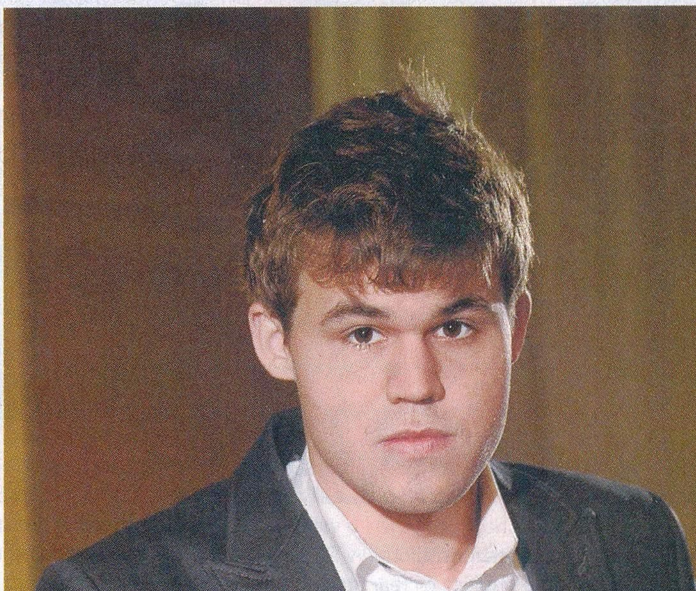
"If you want to **WIN A WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH,** you need to play well not only for one or two hours, but four or five or six...," says the World champion, Magnus Carlsen. **RAKESH RAO** listens in.

Chess has found a new World champion — young, appealing, irrepressibly fun loving and supremely outgoing. Magnus Carlsen promises to rekindle the interest in chess, much like the maverick Bobby Fischer, who won the World Championship in 1972, did.

In contrast to the stereotype image of chess champions, the 23-year-old Norwegian seems keen on getting away from the chessboard. Going by his expressions, he almost looks bored with the process of pushing wood to win.

Carlsen is capable of consistently making moves of optimum strength like no other. Without doubt, he is changing the way many of his predecessors approached the game.

He is not known to be obsessed with preparing the opening lines. His strength lies in getting simple, and what he calls "playable" positions on the board. Carlsen is not the one to offer or accept short draws; he plays to win. His high percentage of victories in tournaments in the past two years has seen him remain World No. 1. In contrast to what his expressions might suggest, he loves to play long games. His uncanny knack of converting even



R. RAGU

MAGNUS CARLSEN... playing like a machine.

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miniscule advantages into victories is becoming a subject of fear among the elite players.

A smart product of a generation that learnt chess more with the help of a 'mouse' than manuals listed as 'chess classics', Carlsen is hailed as the one who plays like a machine. He is able to judge the positions better than his rivals and find the best available moves, much to the frustration of his unsuspecting rivals.

The king of 64 squares has modelled for fashion major G-Star Raw, was named among *Time* magazine's 100 most influential persons in 2013 before *Cosmopolitan* placed him among the 'sexiest men of 2013'. Carlsen plays football and basketball at every available opportunity. He remains a staunch Real Madrid fan. Recently, he bought a new house but is not in a hurry to get his driving licence.

Minutes after his coronation, the champion took time off to speak exclusively to *Sportstar* on a variety of subjects.

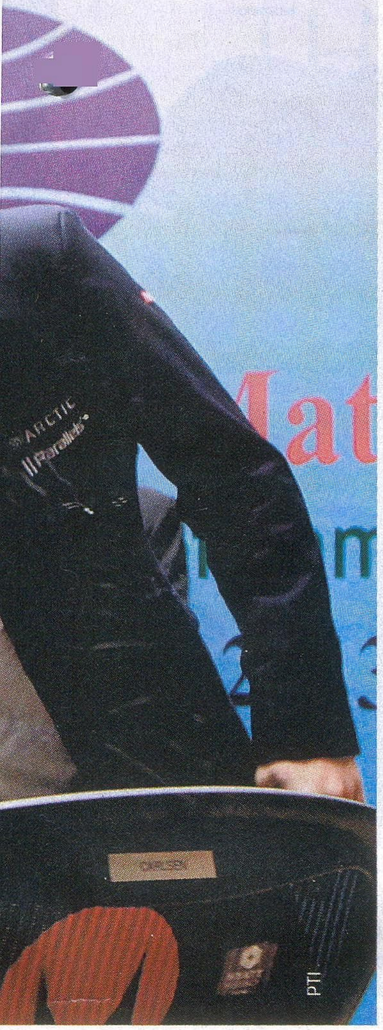
Excerpts:

Question: In the days following the World Championship, usually, the winner spends time talking about the triumphs. Why did you stay away from the media?

Answer: A little bit tired, a little bit exhausted from all the events of the last few days. If you found me uncooperative, that's probably the reason.

Coming to your triumph, was it easier than you expected?

'I THINK MY APPROACH IS A LITTLE BIT DIFFERENT FROM ANAND'S. I THINK, AS FOR NOW, I'M THE BETTER PLAYER. SO, HE NEEDS TO FIND AN ADVANTAGE WITH THE HELP OF THE COMPUTER WHILE I JUST NEED TO EQUALISE HIS ADVANTAGE THERE AND NOT FALL TOO FAR BEHIND.'



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> **'MY ONLY ADVICE TO ANAND (IN PIC, LEFT) WILL BE TO HAVE SOME REST.** TAKE SOME TIME TO FIGURE THINGS OUT AND THEN DECIDE WHAT HE WANTS. IF HE DECIDES TO COME BACK, IT'S WONDERFUL. IF HE DOESN'T, HE HAS EVERY REASON TO BE VERY HAPPY WITH WHAT HE'S GOT.'

It was certainly easier than what I had expected at the start. I thought, if I manage to play at my highest level, Anand would not manage to win a game. And I thought that usually I should be able to press him in a number of games and in one or two of them, he should crack. And he did.

How did you take it when many thought that Anand's experience could negate your energy in the match?

I think, perhaps, at the start, it could have mattered since the first two-three games, I was nervous. Perhaps, not ready for the big occasion. And I think, after three games, I had already matured (laughs). I had the 'feel' for the championship. I think, match-experience is also a bit over-rated as a factor, because every match has a life of its own. Anand might have played many matches like this before. It doesn't mean it's going to be anything similar to this one.

Did you plan to target Anand in any specific area of his game?

Nothing special apart from playing 40 to 50 good moves in every game. That was my main goal. I had to keep playing because I think you've worked so hard before the match. You've worked so hard to get there. So, I think you need to work very hard on the board. If the position is not a draw, you should not agree for a draw. You should play it out. If you want to win a World Championship match, you need to play well not only for one or two hours, but four or five or six...

Do you first play with the computer and then check the position over the board or the other way round?

Ideally, during training sessions, that is what I do. I look at the board before I can solve the computer.

Talking of your pre-match preparations, it was said that you used a super computer. Is it true?

Well, it's not only about me who has been working on a super computer. It's been my 'seconds'. As for me, it's been more important to check the lines, to guide them, to sometimes play on the board what they have been doing.

Is your approach any different from Anand's?

I think my approach is a little bit different from Anand's. I think, as for now, I'm the better player. So he needs to find an advantage with the help of the computer while I just need to equalise his advantage there and not fall too far behind.

How much time did you spend ahead of each game during the championship?

I would spend anything from two hours to 10-15 minutes before any game each day. Looking through some lines and just double-checking the stuff. Apart from that, I would spend time in the evening sometime if it was unclear what I was going to play the next day. Basically, I did not do too much during the match apart from playing the games.

What was the thought behind not revealing the identity of your 'seconds' even after the match? Was it your decision or a collective one?

It's mainly my decision. That's the way I've understood it. It's nice that I am going to play another World Championship match (in 2014). It doesn't mean that I'm not very grateful for their hard work. They have done a wonderful job. I think it is nice for the future matches not to reveal too much.

You once said the format that allows a champion to play only against the challenger was not a fair one. What would you say now?

I thought about it. I'll need some time to enjoy the title and then think what I am going to do next.

Garry Kasparov stayed at the top for over a decade and a half, showing motivation in abundance despite marriage and other family responsibil-

R. RAGU

ities. What do you think can keep you going?

I don't know what will happen. I think, as long as I stay motivated, I will continue to do very well. I don't know what it will take for me to stay motivated — whether I will have to forego other things. Leading up to the World Championship, I haven't done much else than chess. So, I am looking forward to relaxing now and having a more balanced life.

Considering your style of play, which is very different from your great predecessors, do you see yourself as a 'revolutionary' in this era?

Yes, may be a little bit. But I think, it's also been the trend in recent times that people are trying to gain some playable positions from the opening (phase) rather than (looking for) too much of an advantage. Obviously, I play the middle-game and the end-game better than most people, so I can afford to take such an approach.

Knowing the respect and admiration you share with Anand, what would you be telling him, if asked, in this hour of disappointment?

I don't know what I would be telling him. Difficult to give people advice. My only advice to Anand will be to have some rest. Take some time to figure things out and then decide what he wants. If he decides to come back, it's wonderful. If he doesn't, he has every reason to be very happy with what he's got.

Do you realise that the world crown comes with certain responsibilities, like promoting the sport as its best-known ambassador?

Yes. Already for sometime now, I'm involved with chess in schools. I think, it's wonderful to develop children as good chess players but most of all, for all the benefits that chess has in school and in life for kids. I think it is a wonderful game.

"ALREADY FOR SOMETIME NOW, I'M INVOLVED WITH CHESS IN SCHOOLS. I THINK IT'S WONDERFUL TO DEVELOP CHILDREN AS GOOD CHESS PLAYERS BUT MOST OF ALL, FOR ALL THE BENEFITS THAT CHESS HAS IN SCHOOL AND IN LIFE FOR KIDS. I THINK IT IS A WONDERFUL GAME," SAYS CARLSEN (IN PIC, PLAYING WITH STUDENTS OF A COLLEGE IN CHENNAI).

THE THREE DECISIVE GAMES

Three victories for Magnus Carlsen turned the tables on Viswanathan Anand in their World Chess Championship match. Here is a **DETAILED ANALYSIS** of each of the decisive games. By **RAKESH RAO.**

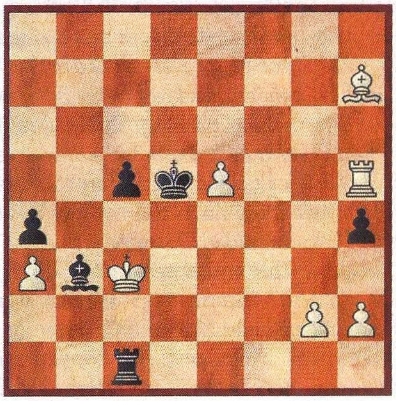
Four drawn games and the pressure to make things happen was shifting towards Magnus Carlsen. His camp was beginning to worry that the team of 'seconds' were not able to pose any problems to Viswanathan Anand in the opening. It was clear that each successive draw brought pressure on the World No. 1 to rethink his opening strategy.

Therefore, the game opened with a few surprises.

Game Five: White: Magnus Carlsen; Black: Viswanathan Anand

Opening: Semi-Slav Defence

1.c4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 c6 4.e4 dxe4 (A big surprise, regarded as a super complicated line.) 5.Nxe4 Bb4+ 6.Nc3 (this move has not been seen at this level for a long time, obviously Carlsen was avoiding Anand's preparations) c5 7.a3 Ba5 8.Nf3 Nf6 9.Be3 Nc6 10.Qd3 cxd4 11.Nxd4 Ng4 12.0–0–0 Nxe3 13.fxe3 Bc7 Inaccuracy, first critical point in the game. [13...Nxd4 14.exd4 0–0 was better] (Carlsen immediately sensed his chances of getting into a slightly favourable endgame) 14.Nxc6 bxc6 15.Qxd8+ Bxd8 16.Be2 Ke7 17.Bf3 Bd7 18.Ne4 Bb6 19.c5 f5 20.cxb6 fxe4 21.b7 Rab8 22.Bxe4 Rxb7 23.Rhf1 Rb5 24.Rf4 g5 25.Rf3 h5 26.Rdf1 Be8 27.Bc2 Rc5 28.Rf6 h4 29.e4 a5 30.Kd2 Rb5 31.b3 Bh5 32.Kc3 Rc5+ 33.Kb2 Rd8 34.R1f2 Rd4 (still equal, though Anand later pointed out that this was a "mistake." It was clear that at this point, Anand was feeling the pressure. Ghosts of threats/problems for the rooks. So Anand began an active defensive route, though not immediately required. Bit of a time pressure, too.) 35.Rh6 Bd1 36.Bb1 Rb5 37.Kc3 c5 38.Rb2 e5 39.Rg6 Critical point. 39...a4? [39...g4! Anand clearly missed an easier way to draw. Trying to solve problems too quickly. He could have passively waited for Carlsen to show his plan but Anand's pro-active approach was destined to backfire.] 40.Rxg5 Rxb3+ 41.Rxb3 Bxb3 42.Rxe5+ Kd6 43.Rh5 Rd1 44.e5+ Kd5 45.Bh7 Rc1+?



But not that easy already. [45...Ra1 leads to a draw but not so easy to judge the continuation correctly over the board. Anand stayed with the worse endgame position that required very precise calculation for every move.] 46.Kb2 Rg1 47.Bg8+ Kc6 48.Rh6+ Kd7 49.Bxb3 axb3 50.Kxb3 Rxg2 51.Rxh4 Ke6 (Anand could have defended a bit better with Kc6 but appeared to have given up already) 52.a4 Kxe5 53.a5 Kd6 54.Rh7 Kd5 55.a6 c4+ 56.Kc3 Ra2 57.a7 Kc5 58.h4 **Carlsen wins.**

Losing from a position that offered many ways to draw had obviously hurt Anand. There were times in the game when he looked annoyed with himself. He knew he missed several chances to hold the position. After all, in a World championship match, one is expected to hold such positions. Carlsen hung on to the slightest chance he got to put Anand under pressure.

CONCLUSION

This was also the biggest turning point of the match. In the first four games, Carlsen had looked far less harmless, though in the fourth game he had spoilt a much bigger advantage. In one sense, the first four games were much to the liking of the World champion — Carlsen surviving the third game and Anand's well-known defence standing firm in the fourth.

Grandmaster Parimarjan Negi

MISSED CHANCES

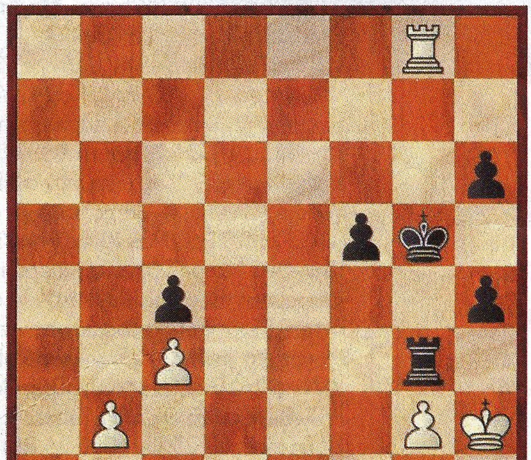
A day after the disappointing loss in Game Five, Anand returned to the board looking to draw parity with white pieces. In the 2010 World Championship, Anand had lost the opener to Challenger Veselin Topalov but hit back in the second. Again in the 2012 title-clash against Boris Gelfand, Anand lost the sixth but won the seventh. The chess world expected a hat-trick of such immediate comebacks from the champion.

Probably, it could have made sense for him to take a draw with white pieces (since he had to play with white pieces again in the seventh game after the change of colours at the half-way stage of the match) and re-strategise or even pull off a surprise in the opening. But it was not clear whether he wanted to play for a draw to ease the tension a bit or go flat out for an equaliser. His confusion did show up in the manner in which the sixth game unfolded. There were many strange elements in this encounter.

Game Six: White: Viswanathan Anand; Black: Magnus Carlsen

Opening: Ruy Lopez Berlin

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 4.d3 Bc5 5.c3 0–0 6.0–0 Re8 7.Re1 a6 8.Ba4 b5 9.Bb3 d6 (Strangely, Anand showed no new ideas against the Closed Berlin Defence in the Ruy Lopez game. The chess world expected Anand to show some of his preparation in these lines since Carlsen was not expected to play anything new in Ruy Lopez, considered Anand's comfort zone. Perhaps, Anand was expecting a new response from Carlsen, who stuck to the already tested lines and still managed to surprise the champion) 10.Bg5 Be6 11.Nbd2 h6 12.Bh4 Bxb3 13.axb3 Nb8 14.h3 Nbd7 15.Nh2 Qe7 16.Ndf1 Bb6 17.Ne3 Qe6 18.b4 a5 19.bxa5 Bxa5 20.Nhg4 Bb6 21.Bxf6 Nxf6 22.Nxf6+ Qxf6 23.Qg4 Bxe3 24.fxe3 (too many exchanges meant white could not improve the position into a winning one. The game appeared to be heading for a draw. With the risk of losing almost removed, Carlsen started playing for advantage and Anand kept drifting in search of a win) 24...Qe7 25.Rf1 c5 26.Kh2 c4 27.d4 Rxa1 28.Rxa1 Qb7 29.Rd1 Qc6 30.Qf5 exd4 31.Rxd4 Re5 (By this time, Carlsen had got a "playable" position and was threatening to take Anand into a slow, long endgame) 32.Qf3 Qc7 33.Kh1 Qe7 34.Qg4 Kh7 35.Qf4 g6 36.Kh2 Kg7 (Anand appeared almost bored and annoyed with the position on the board. He was making random moves assuming that draw was the only result possible and soon decides to sacrifice a pawn) 37.Qf3 Re6 38.Qg3 Rxe4 39.Qxd6 Rxe3 40.Qxe7 Rxe7 41.Rd5 Rb7 42.Rd6 f6 43.h4 Kf7 44.h5 (a move, which Carlsen admitted to have missed) gxh5 45.Rd5 Kg6 (between moves 42 and 45, Carlsen allows Anand to improve the position, leading to a draw) 46.Kg3 Rb6 47.Rc5 f5 48.Kh4 Re6 49.Rxb5 Re4+ 50.Kh3 Kg5 51.Rb8 h4 52.Rg8+ Kh5 53.Rf8 Rf4 54.Rc8 Rg4 55.Rf8 Why? [55.Rc7 just playing Rc8-Rc7 should keep a draw.] 55...Rg3+ 56.Kh2 Kg5 57.Rg8+?? (Rc8 could have kept alive the possibility of a draw)



57...Kf4 58.Rc8 Ke3 59.Rxc4 f4 60.Ra4 h3 61.gxh3 Rg6 62.c4 f3 63.Ra3+ Ke2 64.b4 f2 65.Ra2+ Kf3 66.Ra3+ Kf4 67.Ra8 Rg1 **Carlsen wins.**

CONCLUSION

In such a position, one looks for a simple way to draw. Anand missed Rc8 on the 57th move and with it, an opportunity to draw. Perhaps, at some point, Anand realised that the position was not a 'dead' draw and Carlsen would keep pushing for a win. Again, Anand tried to force a draw instead of waiting for the position to dictate the pace. Anand was trying to calculate… computer analysis shows a draw following precise moves, not easy for a player to find over the board.

Grandmaster Parimarjan Negi

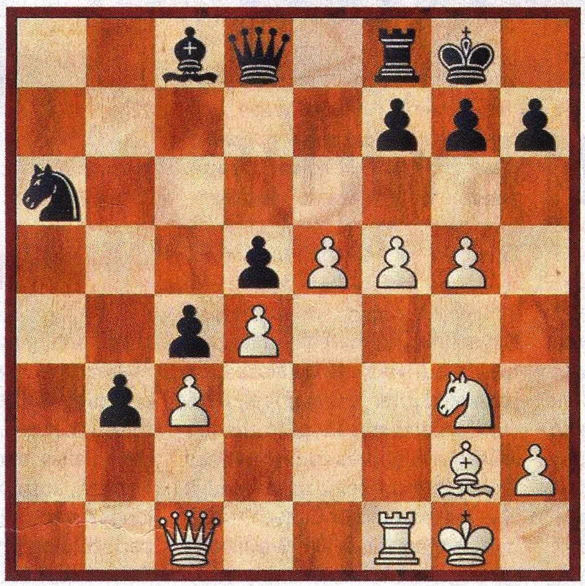
DESPERATE TRY

The match situation was already so bad that Anand was most desperate. He had a calm approach to the game and dominated it. Carlsen was nervous and edgy. He played very unimpressively for the better part of the game.

Game Nine: White: Viswanathan Anand; Black: Magnus Carlsen

Opening: Nimzo Indian Saemisch

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 (Anand started with the queen-pawn for the first time in the match and straightaway found the approval of those watching) 4.f3 d5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 c5 7.cxd5 exd5 8.e3 c4 9.Ne2 Nc6 10.g4 0–0 11.Bg2 Na5 12.0–0 Nb3 13.Ra2 b5 14.Ng3 a5 15.g5 Ne8 16.e4 Nxc1 (by this time, Anand had almost achieved the dynamic position he had aimed for). 17.Qxc1 Ra6 18.e5 Nc7 19.f4 b4 (this was critical) 20.axb4 [or 20.a4; or 20.f5] 20...axb4 21.Rxa6 Nxa6 22.f5 b3!



Anand took 45 minutes and gave the impression that he was either not sure or had calculated it till checkmate for Carlsen. This also changed the direction of the game.

Carlsen, who was 35 minutes behind Anand on the clock before this move, gained a 10-minute advantage and also calculated that he was in no danger of getting checkmated by force. 23.Qf4 Nc7 24.f6 [24.Nh5 was better] 24...g6 25.Qh4 Ne8 [25...Kh8 26.Qh6 Rg8 27.Rf4] 26.Qh6 b2 27.Rf4 b1Q+ 28.Nf1?? Blunder from Anand. [28.Bf1 Qd1 29.Rh4 Qh5 30.Nxh5 gxh5] 28...Qe1 [28...Qd1 29.Rh4 Qh5 30.Rxh5 gxh5 31.Ne3 Be6 32.Bxd5 Bxd5 33.Nf5] **Carlsen wins.**

Carlsen later said, "After my 21st move, I didn't see any way (for Anand) to checkmate me. I was calculating all the forced lines — the line he played amongst many others. It was incredibly dangerous. It holds by only one tempo. But I could not see any mate. I mean, it's just that I got into a difficult position. I just needed to defend as best as I could.

In fact, this was also one of those rarest of rare games where black won without moving his queen and one of the bishops from their starting squares! Ironically, Carlsen was saved by his second queen that made just one move.

The only other similar instance that comes to mind is when Garry Kasparov, playing black, defeated Veselin Topalov in 1995, without making a single queen-move in the Sicilian game. By sheer coincidence, Kasparov, too, won in 28 moves!

CONCLUSION

Anand played the opening confidently and quickly. I wonder why he stuck with e4 (king-pawn) till this point (with white pieces), if he had such a repertoire. Probably, Carlsen's opening choice surprised him. If he had stuck with his plan from the start, he would have probably won this game, or at least had better chances.

Grandmaster Parimarjan Negi

DONE IN BY THE CARLSEN CONUNDRUM

History will record Viswanathan Anand's defeat to Magnus Carlsen in their World Championship match as "one-sided" or an "easy victory" for the Norwegian challenger. The margin, 6.5-3.5, however, does not reflect the true intensity of some of the games played. After all, numbers seldom tell the complete story.

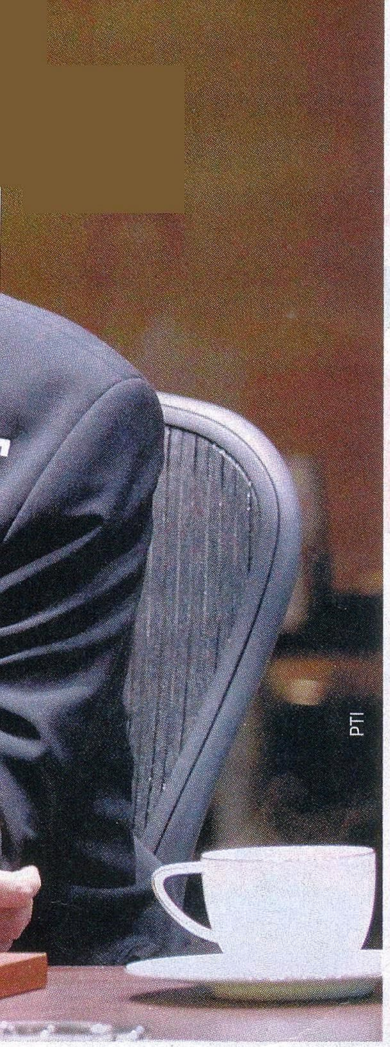
The 12-game match, though far from a mismatch, never lived up to expectations. A clash involving a five-time champion and a young World No. 1, and that too with the world crown at stake, was seen as the best advertisement for the sport. The match had its moments but was not as close as it promised after four games.

If Anand lost thrice in the following five games to find himself on the brink of being dethroned, it was due to a mix of Carlsen's ability to engage his older rival in long games and calculate his own moves accurately with amazing consistency.

ANAND LOST GAMES Five and Six due to singular error in the fifth and sixth hours of play respectively. In the ninth game, a desperate Anand got the position he is known to excel in, looked like checkmating his rival by force but misread his chances. He over-reached himself even after thinking for 45 minutes for one move. The Indian saw a certain victory for himself and played on. Before long, it became clear that Carlsen had his defence in place and Anand had to deal with another defeat.

WITH THE ADVANTAGE of hindsight, it can be said that Anand was misreading the positions after two games. For instance, at the press conference after the third game, he clearly underestimated his chances of winning, saying

Magnus Carlsen's **ABILITY TO ENGAGE HIS OLDER RIVAL IN LONG GAMES** and calculate his own moves accurately with amazing consistency spelt Viswanathan Anand's doom. By **RAKESH RAO.**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VISWANATHAN ANAND... **undermining his own chances and overestimating Carlsen's capabilities.**

"upside was not adequate" for a victory. On the contrary, the analysis showed Anand's best chance of winning a game was here. Though Carlsen said he thought he was "basically lost" at some point, Anand maintained he did not have enough resources to press home the advantage.

Similarly, even in the two games he lost in succession, Anand's assessment surprised many. In Game Five, he pointed to a rook move as the "decisive mistake". On the contrary, Carlsen felt threatened by the same move. Computer analysis showed that position was very much in balance at that point. Anand reiterated he was "lost" after that move although his position deteriorated much later.

SIMILARLY, ANAND'S READING of the crucial phase in Game Six also raised many eyebrows. As the match progressed, it became increasingly clear that Anand was undermining his own chances and overestimating Carlsen's capabilities.

More than once, Anand's observations during the press conferences gave an impression that his reading of positions was not as accurate as seen in the past. It was not clear whether Anand was making a conscious attempt to mislead Carlsen, but surely, it did not help Anand's cause.

Much before the match, former champion Vladimir Kramnik had observed that Anand, perhaps, feared Carlsen. The fact that Anand held a 6-3 head-to-head advantage did not influence the Russian's observation. He was looking at the manner of losses Anand suffered against Carlsen in their previous two decisive encounters. He had advised Anand to deal with the fear and play freely. Anand started well but the two defeats in the first half of the contest clearly swung the match in Carlsen's favour.

LOOKING BACK, ANAND SAID, "It is clear that he dominated. At the start of the match, I thought my chances depended on my ability to last long games without making a lot of mistakes. This year, I've had a lot of problems with mistakes creeping into my play. And I kind of tried to pay some attention to that. But in the end, it was in vain. The way I lost the fifth game was exactly the way, I thought, I could not afford to lose. A fine position in the opening and then, slowly it slipped and so on.

"The (defeat in the) fifth game was a blow because I had really hoped to not to be afraid of him in the long games but simply try to match him. This was not to be. After that, it just got worse and worse. I guess, when it rains, it pours. It is fair enough to congratulate him. My mistakes did not happen by themselves. Clearly he managed to provoke them."

FACTORS LIKE AGE, the difference in the international ratings and rankings of the World champion and the World No. 1, current form etc., did serve as pointers to the eventual result. More than the defeat, the manner of defeat will hurt Anand. After all, Anand knows he played into Carlsen's hands.

Looking ahead, Anand will have his commitments to fulfil. He is due to play in London (in December) and Zurich (in February). He is yet to decide on taking his place in the eight-man field in March to decide Carlsen's challenger in the next year's title-match.

THIS IS CLEARLY NOT THE END of the road for Anand. Many players have questioned his motivation, based on his age and the desire to spend more time with young son, Akhil. In life, priorities do change. Like Kramnik, Anand, too, can bounce back with renewed vengeance, reflecting his desire to prove that he is far from finished.

Objectively, why should Anand put his head down? After all, losing to the strongest player on the planet can never be a matter of shame.

‘CARLSEN COMES FROM A DIFFERENT WORLD CHAMPION LINEAGE’

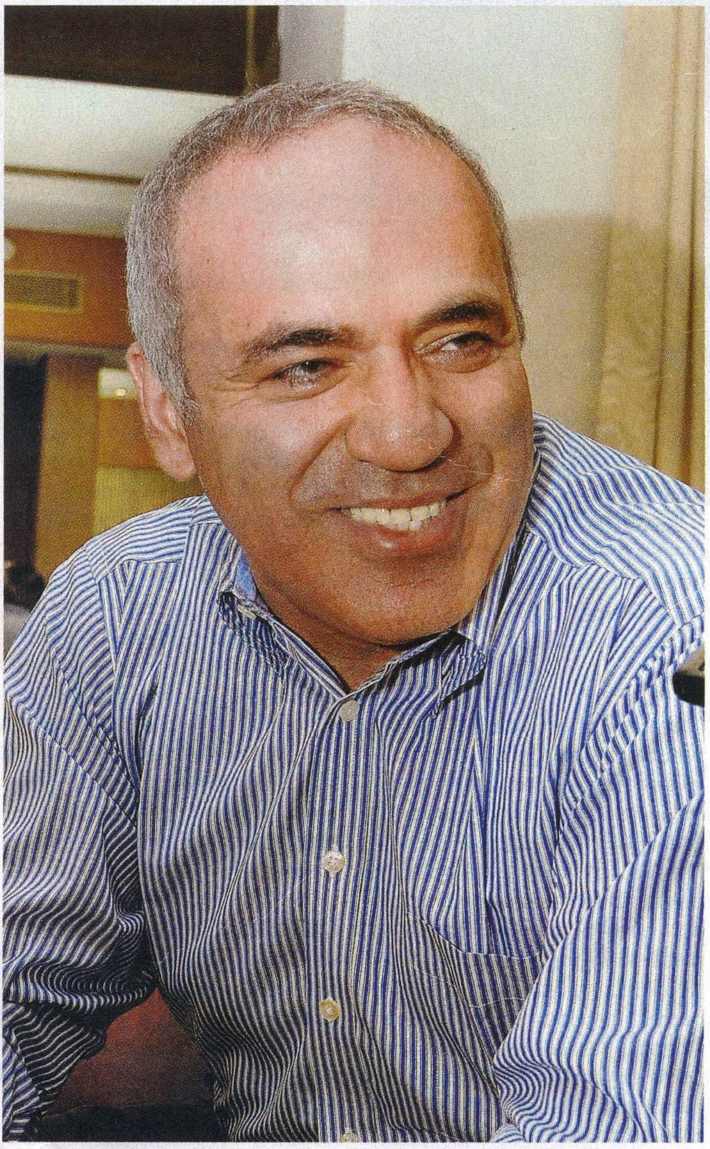
Magnus Carlsen wins accolades from legends such as **GARRY KASPAROV AND NIGEL SHORT**. By RAKESH RAO.

The world of chess responded to the coronation of Magnus Carlsen as the new World champion with excitement.

Many players tweetted throughout the championship. The number of tweets during the championship set a record of sorts. Former champion Garry Kasparov, a regular on twitter, took time off to eulogise the latest sensation in the world of chess.

“Carlsen’s greatest chess strength is his remarkable intuitive grasp of simplified positions and his tremendous accuracy in them. I coached Carlsen for a year, in 2009, and I was amazed at how quickly he could correctly evaluate a position cold, seemingly without any calculation at all. My own style required tremendous energy and labour at the board, working through deep variations, looking for the truth in each position. Carlsen comes from a different world champion lineage, that of Jose Capablanca and Anatoly Karpov, players who sense harmony on the board like virtuoso musicians with perfect pitch.

“IT WAS ALSO, OF COURSE, a painful blow for Anand and India, a nation that adores its sports heroes and with Anand’s fame (the nation) turned into a global chess powerhouse. I am one of few people who have been on both sides of this zero-sum equation, but my sympathies were very much with the



R. RAGU

“I COACHED CARLSEN FOR A YEAR, IN 2009, and I was amazed at how quickly he could correctly evaluate a position,” says Garry Kasparov.

challenger.

"Carlsen is the first world mpion to have been brought up entirely in the age of super-strong computer chess. I grew up with boxes of note-cards and stacks of dusty books and had to learn to use databases and then chess-playing engines as they became strong enough to help, and then to beat, top Grandmasters. Computers have made players of Carlsen's generation nearly machine-like in their objectivity at the board, so it is a pleasing irony that Carlsen himself is a very intuitive, very human player."

Nigel Short, the British Grandmaster who lost to Kasparov in their breakaway World title-match in 1993, wrote, "Carlsen's victory gives succour to the countless enthusiasts who feared that modern chess was becoming an ever-accelerating arms-race of computer engine analysis. His simple philosophy was, in essence, 'Give me an equal position that you have not studied with a computer and I will outplay you.' Call it cocky, if you will, but he was right.

"TWICE, IN GAMES FIVE AND SIX, he defeated Anand with the slenderest of endgame advantages, defying the expectations of even the finest experts. It simply does not do credit to Carlsen to say that Anand just blundered. He blundered – yes – but only because he was subjected to constant, nagging pressure. To use a cricketing analogy, Carlsen's style most resembles that of Glenn McGrath — unspectacular, but extraordinarily accurate."

Anish Giri, a young Dutch Grandmaster with Nepalese origin, was spot on when analysing Carlsen's journey.

"There is also a lot to be said about Magnus' philosophy towards the game. A very strong player, with incredible understanding, ability to calculate and sharp tactical vision, his strength lies in actually playing the game. main idea is to take his opponent out of his comfort zone and play, play, play until the pressure gets too high and his opponent starts to err. The more games Magnus wins, the higher his rating becomes and thus the higher the pressure and fortunately for Magnus this eternal circle keeps both, his rating and his results very high.

"MAGNUS ALSO GETS ALL the professionals mad: all those years of evolution of our game, Botvinnik, developing a whole system of preparation, Fischer, swallowing Russian books on openings, Timman, memorising informants, Karpov with the whole country behind him, Kasparov, with his team working daily like maniacs to find new ideas and directions in the opening... All that in vain, as Carlsen will get you out of your book on move five and the game will start from scratch.

THE NEW WORLD CHAMPION shows us that the game can be played very differently and if you are that good at it, even more successfully. I would also like to say few words about Anand, one of the most remarkable players of all times. Anand has been a great champion for many years and a true legend. It is not clear what his plans are now that he had to give up his title, but I am sure all the chess fans are eagerly waiting for the Tiger to be back!"

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RAKESH RAO

"TO USE A CRICKETING ANALOGY, Carlsen's style most resembles that of Glenn McGrath — unspectacular, but extraordinarily accurate," says Nigel Short.

INTERVIEW/SIMEN AGDESTEIN

'MAGNUS KNOWS HOW TO PSYCHE HIS OPPONENT OUT'

"Magnus has **MASTERED** the endgame like nobody else," says Simen Agdestein, who played a key role in shaping the World champion's chess career. By **P. K. AJITH KUMAR.**

Simen Agdestein has some trouble while speaking. He has a bigger trouble chewing. "I need some food, maybe you could suggest something soft," he says when *Sportstar* meets him at Hyatt Regency, a day after he arrives in Chennai; he had wanted to come earlier, but a nasty fall during the European team chess championship in Warsaw left him with a dislocated jaw.

"I am feeling much better and am glad I could make it at least now," says Agdestein, the world's only Grandmaster (GM) who has scored a goal in international football.

AGDESTEIN, WHO HAS PLAYED a crucial role in shaping Magnus Carlsen as the World chess champion, arrived in time to see his former ward winning Game Nine, which settled the World Championship more or less. He believes Carlsen triumphed in Chennai because he was psychologically stronger than Viswanathan Anand.

"There wasn't much difference in the chess between the two at the World Championship," says the 46-year-old. "But Anand gave too much respect to Magnus. When you do that, you become unsure of yourself. And Magnus knew it, and took advantage. He knows how to psyche his opponent out. He uses psychology over the chessboard, much like former World champion Emmanuel Lasker."

He is not surprised at all to see Carlsen winning the World Championship. "When I first began training Magnus at the Norwegian College of Elite Sport, I could sense that he was a special talent," he says.

It was Agdestein who introduced chess at the institute, just in time for a nine-year-old Magnus to enroll. "There probably would have been no Magnus Carlsen," says Lief Johannesen, another top Norwegian GM. "Norwegian chess owes a lot to Agdestein for his vision."

AGDESTEIN'S VISION ALSO reflects in Carlsen's game. "I had told Magnus that the next World champion would have to be exceptional in the endgame," he says. "I felt Garry Kasparov had achieved with computer analysis that no player could have surpassed. So I thought the future World champions will have to play chess more practically, much less with the aid of computers. Magnus has been doing that and yes, he has mastered the endgame like nobody else."

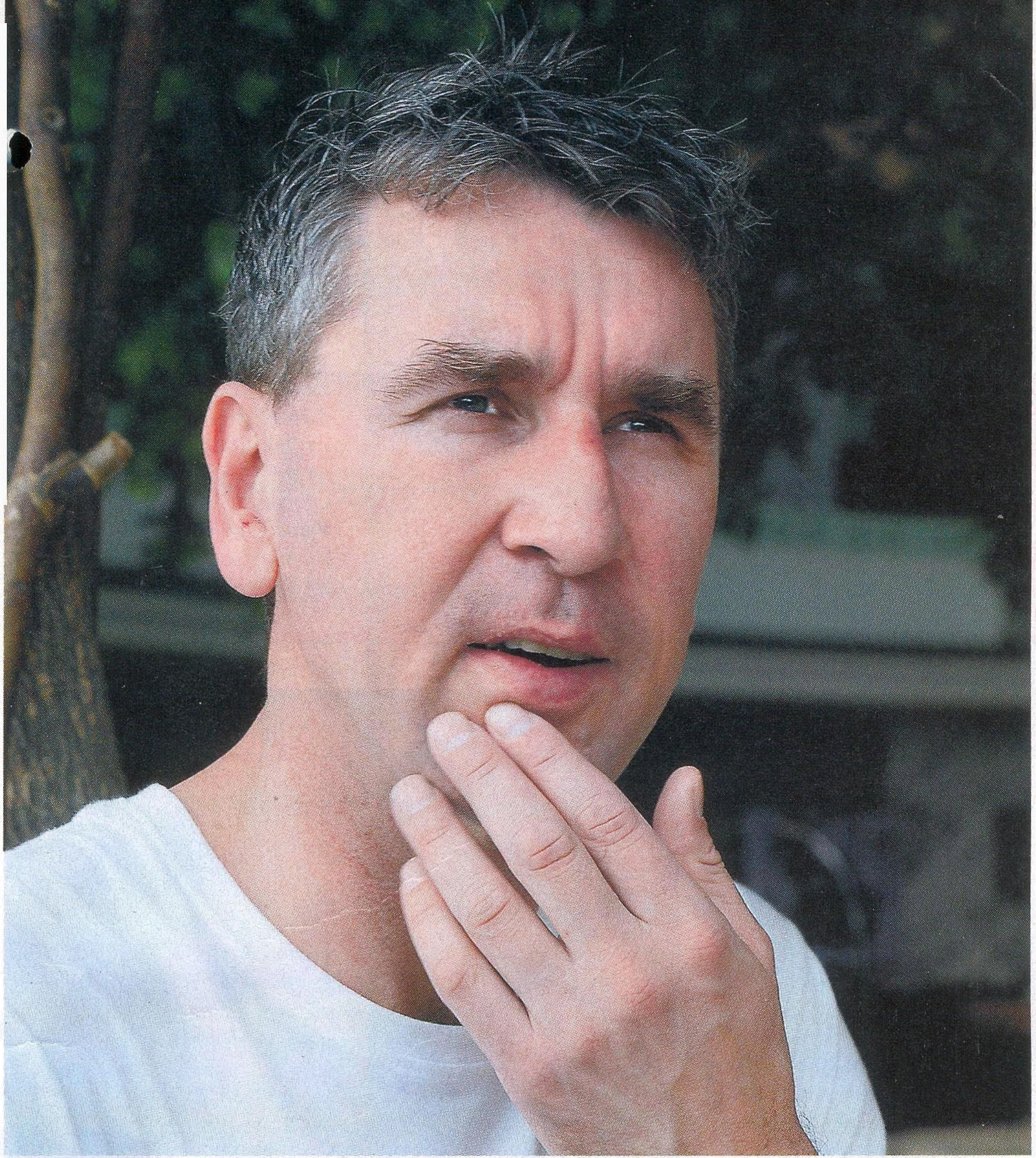
He believes Carlsen could dominate world chess for a long time. "I think as a player he comes closest to Fischer," he says. "But Fischer could not dominate world chess for a considerable time because he had problems controlling his mind. Magnus, on the other hand, is very level-headed. He has the talent and the will to dominate the sport for a very long time."

He says he wasn't, in a way, surprised to see Anand crumbling against Magnus. "I have always felt Anand is a bit nervous," he says. "He was even more nervous than usual here against Magnus."

Agdestein has watched from close quarters Anand's ascendancy too. He was the top seed of the 1987 World junior chess championship in Baguio, Philippines. "I was the top seed and was the runner-up at the previous World juniors," he says. "So I was confident of winning the title."

BUT, ANAND UPSET HIM and all his plans, as the Indian emerged the World junior champion and soon became one of the hottest names in international chess. If Carlsen's life was a Hollywood movie, Agdestein would have plotted his revenge right after that shattering loss to Anand.

Maybe the Carlsen story would have worked better in Bollywood, because his manager



K. V. SRINIVASAN

Espen Agdestein, brother of Simen.

Agdestein was already a Grandmaster when he played in that World junior championship. But he was even more passionate about football.

"YES, IT WAS QUITE A CHALLENGE to be of world class in both chess and football at the same time, but I managed to do that for a few years," says Agdestein, who has scored a goal for Norway in an international match. "I also played for my country in the World Cup qualifiers. My club was Lyn, Oslo."

A KNEE INJURY CURTAILED his football ambitions. He is still going strong in chess though. With an Elo rating of 2627, he is ranked second only to Carlsen in Norway. A couple of months ago, he won the Oslo International GM tournament.

He is also an author of chess books, including a biography of Carlsen. He plays the piano too and was a contestant in a dance competition on Norwegian television. And he is a teacher at Valler Upper Secondary School, Sandvika, Norway.

"I have to hurry a bit now, as I have to write a column," says Agdestein. You are unlikely to meet too many men with talents in so many fields.

"YES, IT WAS **QUITE A CHALLENGE** TO BE OF WORLD CLASS IN BOTH CHESS AND FOOTBALL AT THE SAME TIME, BUT I MANAGED TO DO THAT FOR A FEW YEARS."

'IT IS EXCITING TO SEE THAT CHESS IS BECOMING BIG BACK HOME'

"Because of Anand's emergence as the World champion, several young players took up the sport in India, which is a strong nation in chess today, and I hope Carlsen has a **SIMILAR EFFECT** in Norway," says Joran Jansson, president of the Norwegian Chess Federation, in a chat with **P. K. AJITH KUMAR**.

Joran Jansson used to play chess with Henrik Carlsen at the same club in Norway. So he has been following the progress of Henrik's son, Magnus, with interest for a long time. He caught a flight to Chennai to watch Magnus being crowned the World champion, not just as his father's friend, but as the president of the Norwegian Chess Federation.

"I WANTED TO BE HERE in Chennai to witness the greatest moment in history for Norwegian chess, and Norwegian sport, in fact," Jansson told *Sportstar* at Hyatt Regency on the day Carlsen won the World Championship. "It is exciting to see that chess is becoming big back home."

He is hoping Carlsen would do to Norway what Viswanathan Anand did to India. "Because of Anand's emergence as the World champion, several young players took up the sport in India, which is a strong nation in chess today, and I hope Carlsen has a similar effect in Norway," he says.

"Already, there are some promising signs. Chessboards were sold out in Oslo once the World Championship got underway here." He said the viewership of the World Championship was even larger than that of winter

Pics: K. V. SRINIVASAN

sports. "And that is something which didn't happen before, as winter sports are hugely popular back home," he says. "As much as 20 per cent of the population was watching some of the World Championship games. And we had chess on the front page in our newspapers."

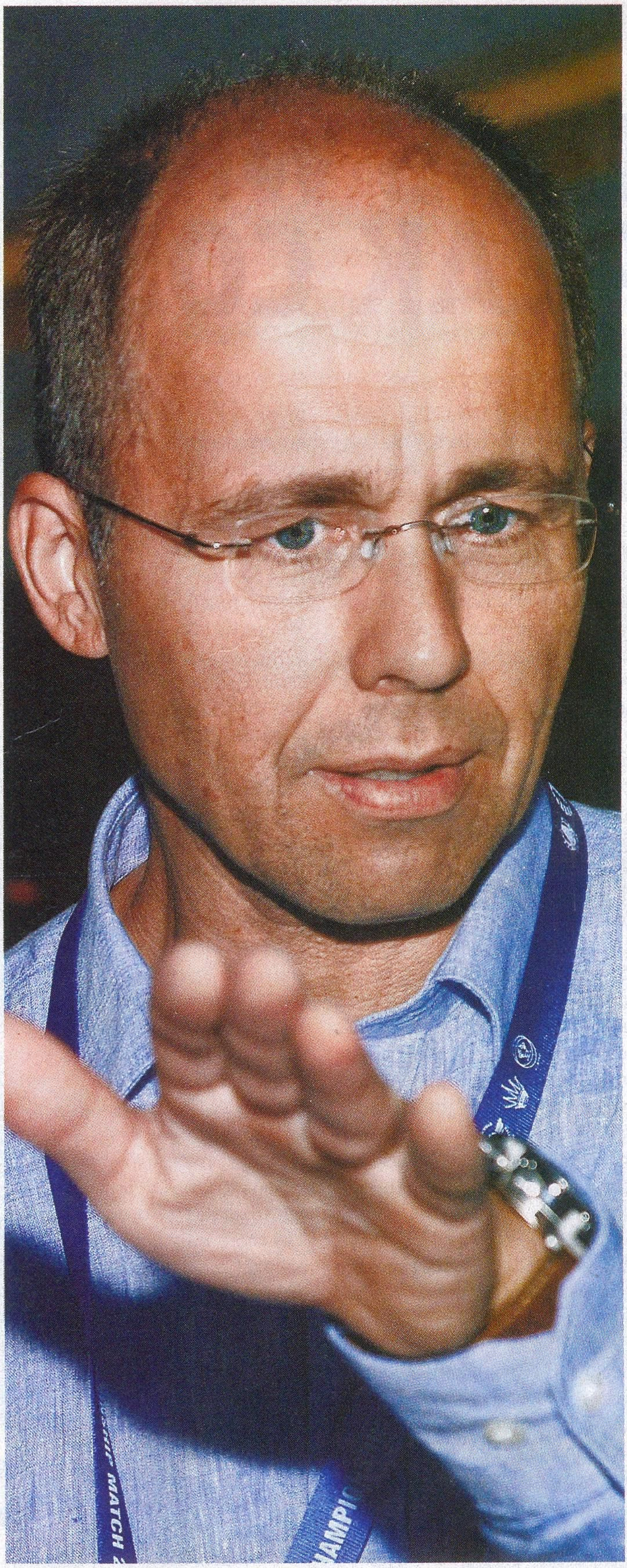
HE SAYS CARLSEN succeeded not just because of his natural talent. "He has a very supportive, understanding family," he says. "His father Henrik and I used to play for the same club, you know. Carlsen is also lucky that he has got the best people to guide him, like his manager Espen Agdestein."

Jansson says already more children have started playing in Norway because of Carlsen. "Of course our population of five million is much smaller than India's, but there are possibilities of new champions coming from Norway because of the Carlsen effect," he says.

HE IS ALSO LOOKING FORWARD to returning the favour — hosting Anand in Norway. "It would be great to have Anand for the Norway Super Tournament in June, 2014," he says.

Norway is also hosting the Chess Olympiad next year. It will be held at Tromso, Carlsen's birthplace.

"ALREADY, THERE ARE SOME PROMISING SIGNS. CHESSBOARDS WERE SOLD OUT IN OSLO ONCE THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP GOT UNDERWAY HERE."



HENRIK CARLSEN, FATHER OF MAGNUS. "He (Magnus) has a very supportive, understanding family," says Joran Jansson.